SEVENTH INSTALLMENT

Johnny Breen, 16 years old, who had spent all of his life aboard a Hudson river tugboat plying near New York, is tossed into the river in a terrific collision which sinks the tug, drowns his mother and the man he called father. Ignorant, unschooled, and fear driven, he drags himself ashore, hides in the friendly darkness of a huge covered truck—only to be kicked out at dawn—and into the midst of a tough gang of river rat boys who beat and chase him. He escapes into a basement doorway where he hides. The next day he is rescued and taken into the home of a Jewish family living in the rear of their second-hand clothing store. He works in the sweatshop store—and is openly courted by Becka—the young daughter. . . . The scene shifts to the home of the wealthy Van Horns —on 5th Avenue, where lives the bachelor—Gilbert Van Horn — in whose life there is a hidden chapter. That chapter was an affair with his mother's maid, who left the house when he was accused. The lives of Johnny Breen and Gilbert Van Horn first cross when Van Horn sees Breen win his first important ring battle. Pug Malone, fight trainer, rescues young Breen from a crooked manager, takes him in hand, finds Breen cannot read and starts him to night school.

Now go on with the story:

As he burrowed and grubbed and collected and stored the kernels of fact, he visioned a greater, vaster thing than all of the astonishments of the surrounding city.

Hubert Malcolm, his teacher, met John one Saturday afternoon, quite by accident. They were in Union Square. 'John, I live over this way; come in and have tea. Mrs. Malcolm will be happy to see you. I've been telling her of your progress."

It was a flat, so clean and fresh, so simple and pure. John dropped spoons, blushed, stammered. Enid Malcolm seemed like an angel in her gingham dress and the baby, tucked in a crib, curled its pink hands about his fingers. It had never occurred to John that a baby could be so clean, and could seem so happy.

Malcolm smoked a pipe, and John like a wild thing, sat tongue-tied.

"Are there many places like this?" he finally asked, his tones harsh. Mrs. Malcolm overheard the question.

"Millions of them," she smiled, "only much nicer than this."

John knew the quiet-voiced woman was a liar. For the rest of the visit he sat mute and ill at ease, and then his friend took him to the Square and walked with him as far as Fourteenth Stree. John headed back to the Bowery more bewildered than ever.

John Breen had lost his interest in fighting, in the greater thrill of the fight for that unknown prize, the astonishments always lying just ahead. He was spurred on by curiosity, and not by ambition. He was the primitive climbing to the top of a mountain, not for food or treasure, but for a better view. Honor and prizes, and prosperity, as Pug Malone kept pointing out to John, lay behind the direction he attempted. In several clandestine bouts, John Breen only held his own, in one, with the Philadelphia scrapper Jerry Wilke, he almost lost, until, at the very ragged edge of his downfall, Pug pleaded with him, cried to him, implored him, literally throwing the handlers from the ring, talking and arguing with John who sat sullen and preoccupied.

The bell sounded and John Breen a sudden light in his eyes, his face battered, stepped into the center of the ring and knocked Wilke cold with a single perfect blow to the jaw. A tremendous howl of approval greeted him; admirers tried to carry him from the ring.

"Leave him alone,' Pug cautioned. "That kid was thinkin' of somethin' when he hit Jerry, or he never would of pulled that punch."

"What was you dreamin' about, John, when you soaked that Quaker?" Malone asked as they prepared for bed.

"I was knocking the whole prize fight game in the eye. I'm through, Pug," John smiled sadly.

"I guess you're right," Malone agreed. "That crack was too good to be true. Heel, wish I knew what to do with you!'

'I'll leave." John stood looking out of the window.

"Not if I know it!" Pug jumped up and grasped John's hand. 'You stick around an' finish that school. I won't fight you any more, can't risk it. The next time some low-brow scrapper will trim you good. An' then where will I be?"

So John Breen continued to tend bar during the day, to work in the Samson Club gym, to live with Malone. Another year drew its veil of changes over the face of the growing city.

"Judge Kelly says they'll stand for anythin' an' they'll pay—pay well. The McManus looked yellow and flabby in contrast with the trainer. "If you work them guys rough they'll fall for you." and then looking up at Pug with veined bloodshot eyes, he spoke vehemently. "Kick 'em, beat 'em up, sweat tha liver out of 'em. Judge Kelly watched you, Pug, knows what you kin do, an' he's lined up guys who'll pay. But, mind, Pug, you got to turn tha trick, three at a time. If you set 'em up right it means a big thing for you, a damn big thing. I should say."

"What joint did you say it was?"

"Greenbough Farm, a fancy place I guess, up in Westchester. Kelly owns it: got it handed to him, or somethin'."

"I'll need Breen," Malone spoke as if to himself.

"Take him. Him an' his books. No use fighting that kid no more—he's a dead pan; a best. Ain't he, Hannon?"

"Yes, sir, yes, sir," the immaculate Hannon chimed in as Malone left the room. The McManus smiled genially.

"That fixes Kelly on that," he grunted. 'And I'll put Patsy in charge of the Corner."

Greenbough Farm consisted of a fair acreage of rocky uneven land upon which a roomy comfortable old house was sinking into gradual decay.

Carpenters from the city, working under direction of Pug Malone, converted the barn into a practical gymnasium. A farmer and his wife and son were engaged to run the place, milk the cows, tend the garden, and the chickens, and cook the meals.

The farmhouse itself was given a thorough cleaning. The wall paper was stripped from the place, the plaster sized and coated with washable tint. Floors were painted, and bed rooms were prepared on a model of Spartan simplicity. Canvas cots and stools, without backs, were placed near the windows and a small rag rug was added by way of luxury. Three pegs were driven in the doors for the hanging up of clothes, and all closets were locked and nailed. There were no lights, no mirrors, no shelves, no pictures. There was absolutely nothing to distract from the business of sleeping, for which the rooms were designated.

Pug also fitted the windows with cleats which prevented them from closing by a foot at the top and bottom, and of course there were no shades.

"There's nothin' de luxe about this place," Pug remarked to John when the work had been completed, a labor in which both John and the trainer shared with enthusiasm. The green country was a refreshment to John Breen. In those brief moments, before he dropped off to slumber, he seemed to see a fading city, a vast pile of tenements flashing with lights and the jumbled voices and cries of millions, as if he had alighted in the midst of it suddenly, as he had, and as if he were then standing on the rear platform of a train, whirling him away. The quick rumble of the wheels of his ideas lulled him to sleep.

And on Saturday Gilbert Van Horn, Judge Marvin Hall and the great insurance magnate, E. K. Southerland, came under the strict regimen and spartan simplicity of Pug Malone's training farm.

Van Horn and Johnny Breen were thrown together and unconsciously became strongly attached to each other.

Two weeks after the arrival of the trio the bags with their elaborate provisions for comfort, their toilet sets, silk pajamas, and fancy knickers, the country toggery of city folk, were again on the verandah. The three men, strangely sober, tough and clear-eyed, marched up, took their traps down to the waiting buckboard and then, of a sudden, they rushed back yelling like Indians. They grabbed the trainer, hoisted him on their shoulders, carried him down the field and tossed him on a hay stack.

"Boys, you better'n I expected," Pug shouted, waving at them as they ran for the buckboard, calling "goodby" to John Breen and Pug, while the grin on the face of Charlie and the frantic apron waving from the kitchen doorway, and the expensive face of the driver, told of extraordinary largess by the parting guests.

Pug Malone became sole owner of the farm, for Judge Kelly, impulsive and liberal, sounded the full measure of his worth, and besides advertising it, he made easy terms for the trainer. Van Horn became a frequent visitor and brought many of his friends; he seemed even more interested in John Breen than in the farm. E. K. Southerland said nothing, but sent Malone a check that almost took his breath away.

John was approaching twenty. He was an indefatigable reader, his room, on the top floor of Greenbough, was littered with books, and while the rigid rules turned lights out at nine, John's blazed far into the night as he continued his explorations.

While John was making haphazard progress in learning, the great city to the south, the city that loomed up on clear days and glowed with a cold aura of light on sharp winter nights, added another million to the tally of its inhabitants.

Van Horn, in his own way a lover of the city, took John Breen on long rides through the width of the metropolis in his new high-powered racing car, a second French machine that sped over the poor roads with a solft purr of chains clicking in giant sprockets.

What was this damn thing, the city? Van Horn, in arguments at Greenbough, with men such as Rantoul, the engineer, attempted to fathom its meaning. His ancestors had predicted great things for it, and their faith had been rewarded but their dreams were aleady far behind the actuality that was the city in 1905.

"It's simply a natural coming together for cheaper warmth and shelter and food. It's a result of specialization in industry made possible by progress in the mechanical arts," Rantoul locked upon the city as just beginning.

"This building will never stop," Herkimer Pratt, the auctioneer, insisted. "Ten years, twenty, thirty, fifty, a thousand years. It will keep right on until—until——"

"Until what?" asked Van Horn.

"Well, I guess it will continue until all the people of the world are assembled in cities." His vision was of a world cut up in city lots.

John Breen, listening, reading, and appraising, sensed the immensity of the city.

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John Breen had come up through the difficult period of life with a rush. His childhood held on into manhood, and his sudden crash from the shell of circumstance found him emerging into a world of delirious earnestness. John was twenty-two, and as he strode beside the rather tall figure of Gilbert Van Horn, on one of their long walks, in early September, a casual observer might have pronounced them father and son. Gilbert Van Horn and John Breen had become friends, close, yet miles and miles apart.

They talked as they had long talked, on many subjects. Van Horn's interest in the prize ring and the ability and knowledge gave them a common topic. The fights, many of which they saw together, had long ceased to be an absorbing interest with John Breen.

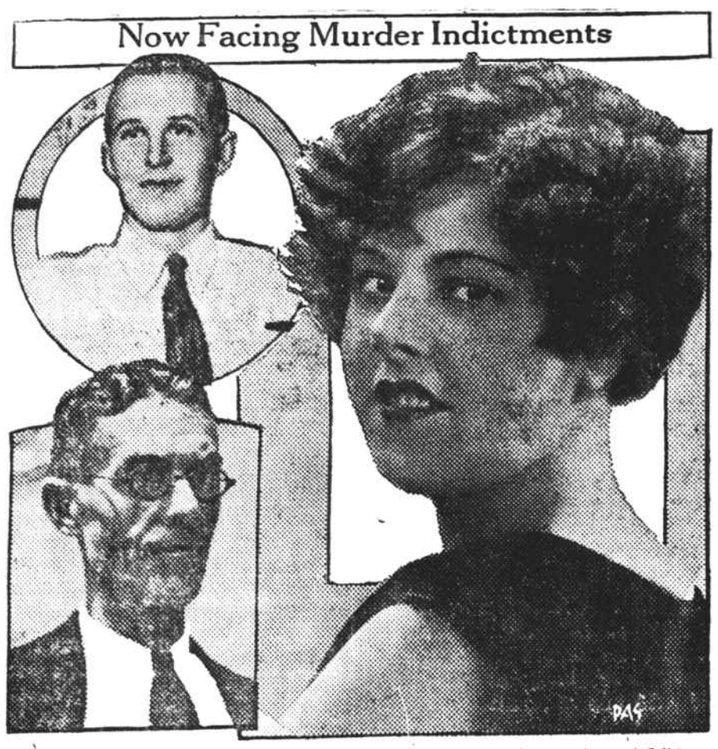
"Gil." He paused for a moment. The older man was puffing as they lifted over a rise of ground. "I'm getting tired of this training game, and I haven't fought in the ring since Pug came up here. Fact is I'm not so sure there is any real fight in the business. Gil, it'a rotten business."

"Right, John."

"I've made up my mind to break this training, Gil."

"I guessed you would, John."

Now Facing Murder Indictments



A trial which seems certain to attract national attention is that of Libby Holman Reynolds and Albert (Ab) Walker at Winston-Salem, N. C., on an indictment charging murder of the former's husband, Z. Smith Reynolds, heir to a tobacco fortune. Libby Holman Reynolds, famed Broadway "Blues" singer, and Walker, companion of the late husband, Reynolds, were released following the Coroner's inquest, but rearrested following an investigation by county authorities. The death of Reynolds terminated a big party over July 4th weekend. Photos show Libby Holman, Ab Walker and Alfred Holman, Cincinnati lawyer, who will help defend his daughter

For Dawest Post

Wilson M. Mills, Detroit financial authority and banker is believed to be slated to head the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, from which Charles M. Dawes recently resigned.

For Vice-President

James H. Maurer, Socialist candidate for Vice-President, with Norman Thomas, is waging a vigorous campaign which was launched at Washington last week. He addressed a mass meeting at the Auditorium and later the Bonus Army in camp.

Farm Questions and Answers

Question—With my feed crops ruined by the dry weather what can I plant that will give me feed next spring?

Answer: Both a hay and grain crop should be planted this fall. The hay crop should consist of about two bushels of cats with 20 pounds of vetch to the acre. This should be broadcast or drilled in between September 15 and October 1. For the grain ration we suggest two bushels of oats, five pecks of wheat, or two bushels of barley. The oats and barley should be sown between October 1 and 15, and the wheat betwwen October 15 and November 1. These crops do not need fertilizer if the land was fertilized last spring. It will pay, however, to top dress the crops with nitrate of soda or sulphate of ammonia next spring.

Question—I have been trying to improve my land by planting cowpeas. I get a fair crop of hay but the corn crop the following year is poor, the plants stunted and the leaves turn yellow. What is wrong with the land?

Answer—You are trying to do the impossible. To improve land by planting legumes, the hay or vines must be left on the land. The crop mention is a heavy feeder especially for potash and when you cut the hay you leave the land poorer than when you started. Plow under the entire crop for best results or, if the hay is cut, potash must be added at the rate of 30 to 50 pounds of muriate of potash to the regular corn fertilizer.

Question—How much acreage planted to temporary pasture should I allow for each cow in my herd?

Answer—The acreage allowed per cow depends to a great extent upon the productivity of the soil but on good land onehalf an acre will produce sufficient feed for spring grazing and will also leave a good amount of material to cut for hay or to turn under for soil improvement. A fertile soil however is necessory for best results in any pasture and this should be fertilized with from four to five hundred pounds of a complete high grade fertilizer. With proper fertilization and the addition of two tons of ground limestone one acre will furnish sufficient grazing for two animals.

Question—I have ample range and an abundance of green feed for 200 pullets that will begin to lay about the middle of October. Would it be safe to stop feeding mash and develop my birds on scratch feed alone?

Answer—You would be making a great mistake. We have a large number of birds coming into the laboratory with a history of feeding conditions similar to those outlined. Invariably these birds show the result of such feeding and slowly develop constitutional weaknesses due to a lack of animal protein. Such pullets go into the laying house under a handicap and do not show good production. Continue the mash feeding and develop the birds properly for profitable egg production.

The island of Ceylon, with an area about the size of West Virginia has a population estimated at 5,500,000.